

ABSTRACT

A system for monitoring and dispensing medical items includes a plurality of hook registers (10). Each of the hook registers includes sensors (48, 60, 62, 64) sensing the removal or addition of a medical item to the storage location on the hook register. Each hook register has a microprocessor (66) connected to the sensor which stores a count of the items added or removed from the location. The microprocessor also includes location identifying information specifically associated with the particular hook register. The microprocessor is periodically polled by a controller (72) which reads and stores the count and location identifying information from each of the hook registers. The controller information is periodically read by a data terminal (76) which is connected through a local area network (82) to a remote computer (84) having a processor and data store. A user of the data terminal is enabled to specify a patient for whom medical items will be used when the items are removed from the hook registers or other storage locations. In addition, the system also monitors inventories of items and levels of usage by users. The system also monitors and controls the dispense of other medical items from box registers (110) as well as controls the dispense of items from secure storage locations such as electronic lock drawers (96) and medicine dispensers (100).